TheHighlander

Thursday Aug 28 2025 | Issue 704

INSIDE: HOME IN THE HIGHLANDS FREE

Doused

Young Highlander Oisin enters the splash zone at Pride in the Highlands streetfest Aug. 24. See more on pages 14-16.
Photo by Sally Huang.

Warning about low lake levels

By Lisa Gervais

Waterfront property owners are being advised that traditionally low water levels have arrived early this year – and they should be ready in case they have to take action, such as moving docks and water lines and taking boats out of the water early.

"There's going to be people whose boats are stuck in the mud this coming weekend," said Carol Moffatt, who is a member of the Coalition for Equitable Water Flow (CEWF) executive committee.

Moffatt added that depending on people's lakes, "the (low) water levels are two to four weeks ahead of normal."

CEWF is recommending people be attentive to the Trent Severn Waterway drawdown and fully understand it is 14 to 28 days ahead of usual.

Asked if any lakes in particular were experiencing extreme low water levels, Moffatt said, "each lake is affected differently, but the percentage of fill across the board is generally the mid-to-high 50 per cents. If this was October, it wouldn't really matter, but it's August."

She said what CEWF is also trying to do is get people "to be a little more self-starting" by looking at CEWF's website and the Trent Severn's live water map and graphs.

"All of the lakes where there are dams; they all have a graph. You can look at the graph and go 'yikes, my water seems to be very close to the all-time low.' So, if CEWF says 'hey, heads up,' that people immediately go and look at their graph and go 'okay, I need to take care of whatever I need to take care of'."

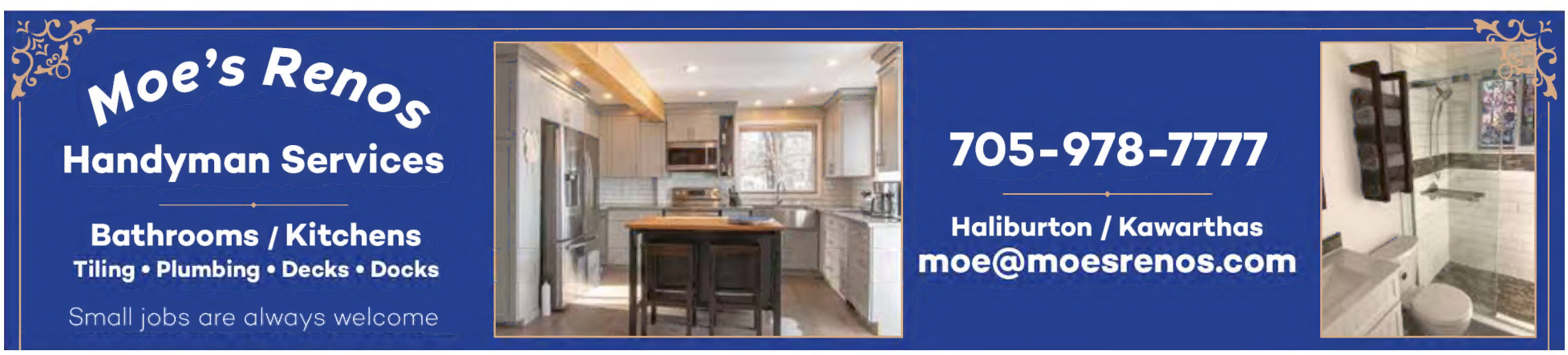
Moffatt said the last time the region experienced extreme low water levels was 2012. She said it was a drought summer, "not dissimilar to this one" and people experienced problems.

She said someone on the Boshkung Lake page had posted they took their boat out three weeks ago because it is a deep hull boat and they cannot get under the bridge to get to the boat launch if the water is too low.

"People also need to be aware of how these levels affect their local boat ramp should they have one. Some boat ramps are a bit more of a deep-water boat ramp. Some, like Little Boshkung, go into shallow water and a sand bar.

"Know your lake, know your levels, know your boat ramp, know your own personal foot valve and boating situation and plan accordingly."

Continued '**Moffatt**' on page 2



Highlander news

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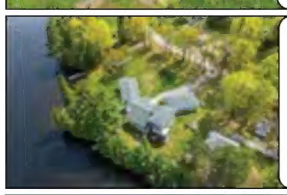

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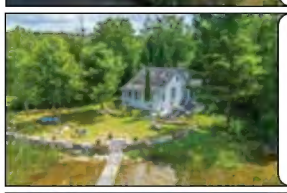

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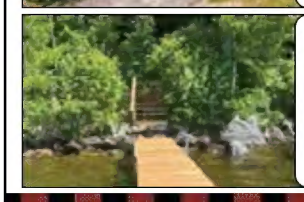

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SPECIALIZING IN WATERFRONT PROPERTIES

Original architectural renderings of the KLHHC build. *File.*

New Minden housing a go

By Lisa Gervais

Work has begun on an affordable housing project next to the Minden Legion.

Kawartha Lakes Haliburton Housing Corporation (KLHHC) director of human services, Cheryl Faber, said on Aug. 26 that KLHHC has contracted Derigay Developments Limited and clearing of the site for the build has commenced.

She said they hope the project is complete for the fall of 2026, with occupancy in the fourth quarter of next year.

The complex will comprise 35 housing units.

"As the director, human services and (interim) chief executive officer for KLH Housing Corporation, I am happy to see that this project is underway and for it to come to fruition in 2026. It is a great achievement for the community," Faber said.

It was announced in early 2025 that KLHHC was getting $2.4 million in provincial funding to put towards the housing development on Hwy. 35, just south of the legion.

Minden Hills mayor Bob Carter said this week he was unable to comment. However, last January he said the funding was "very, very welcome. That $2.4 million has me very excited that we will actually be breaking ground on this project this year."

It was back in September, 2020 that a public-private partnership was announced between long-time cottager, Bill Switzer, who donated the land, and the corporation. The 35 units are planned for the west side of Hwy. 35 at County Road 21, between Rotary Park and the Minden Legion, overlooking the Gull River. At the time, then corporation CEO Hope Lee, now retired, said the townhouses – valued at $6.8 million in 2020 - would provide units towards affordable housing targets.

Switzer first approached Carter about doing something with the land in 2018. Some of the delay stemmed from the Ministry of Transportation not signing off on the site.

Faber said that to apply for community housing, as administered by the consolidated municipal service manager for housing services in Haliburton County and the City of Kawartha Lakes, applications and more information on eligibility and the standardized process can be found at www.kawarthalakes.ca/en/living-here/community-housing.aspx

Moffatt: TSW has done a really good job

Continued from page 1

Moffatt added some people think the Trent Severn draws water "so people on the canal can ride around on their boats." She said it may be true, but is not accurate. She said the TSW has to maintain minimum flows to service municipal water systems, such as in Peterborough. So, it is the same flow for drinking water and navigation; with the priority being the water system.

She added, "the daily working considerations for the system have been supported by TSW. They're not just saying 'we need some water, we're going to take it from lake A to Z…they have done a really good job, as best they can, in maintaining the minimum flows across the watershed."

She added they have done so in extreme weather.

"It's not just that the rain is not filling the watershed, it's also that the heat and the wind is evaporating what water we have …and then you add the water they have to take and you end up in the situation we're in."

Moffatt reiterated, "if we don't get a lot of rain and you don't make a plan, then don't be surprised if, in two weeks, your boat's in the mud."

Go to CEWF.ca for more information.

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From left to right: County Coun. Cec Ryall (deputy mayor of Highlands East); MPP Steve Pinsonneault, parliamentary assistant to the ministry of emergency preparedness and response; County warden Dave Burton (mayor of Highlands East); minister of emergency preparedness and response, Jill Dunlop, and County coun. Bob Carter (mayor of Minden Hills). *County of Haliburton website.*

Carter: ministers listening

By Lisa Gervais

Minden Hills mayor Bob Carter said attending the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference in Ottawa Aug. 17-20 was worthwhile.

His township had a large presence, with CAO Cynthia Fletcher and deputy mayor Lisa Schell also attending. Their colleague, coun. Pam Sayne, was also there on behalf of the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, as she sits on its board.

County of Haliburton CAO Gary Dyke was present, along with warden and Highlands East mayor Dave Burton, and County and Highlands East coun. Cec Ryall. No one was there on behalf of Algonquin Highlands and Dysart et al.

Carter said "it was busy. We had delegations from Minden, from the County, some joint ones with the County and City of Kawartha Lakes. There was lots going on."

The Minden Hills mayor added he felt like the politicians were listening.

"Absolutely. Actually, we had a couple of delegations where the minister, especially new ministers, really weren't aware of certain facts. And there's some things that affect rural areas in a different way than they do the city. They were listening and in a lot of cases, they were getting back to us right away, so, hopefully we did some good."

For example, a delegation from the County met with the Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response, addressing specific emergency preparedness needs for small rural communities. And, a joint delegation between the County and CKL met with the Ministry of Education, seeking support for investment in needed childcare spaces overall, as well as bringing attention to the need to create mechanisms to support additional in-home childcare opportunities to serve the rural community.

Carter said he felt more encouraged than some past conferences.

"It was very interesting actually. When premier Doug Ford spoke, he had lower energy than normal. But he did it in a different way. With this whole thing with U.S. president Donald Trump, he was almost statesmanlike."

In his Aug. 18 speech, Ford spoke about the threat of Trump's tariffs and the need to spend money on Ontario products.

"Ontario municipalities spend tens of billions of dollars every year on procurement," he said. "And that money should be going back into our communities and our province."

He further encouraged townships to have staff back in the office five days a week. "It will help bring the public service in municipalities closer to the people they serve and will revitalize our workplaces and downtowns across Ontario," he said.

Ford announced an additional $1.6 billion to the Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program – one the Ontario government had already put $2.3 billion into - to boost housing.

Carter said having such a large contingent at AMO, "does more to bring the town forward in these conferences than we can at any other time.

"I was able to speak to seven to eight ministers. Even if we didn't have a delegation, there is a reception and you get a chance to meet them and exchange cards. I've heard from a couple of them already."

He added, "I got to speak to three or four mayors; just bouncing things off them; such as 'how are you doing that? or how are you handling that problem'? It's really helpful. You can get very isolated and very provincial in your thinking if you do not."

Highlander news

Dorset hall replacement on council radar

By Mike Baker

Algonquin Highlands council has been told it should develop a long-term plan for replacing its Station 60 fire hall in Dorset – one of 29 recommendations outlined in a new fire master plan tabled in mid-August.

Terry Gervais of Peterborough-based consultancy firm Loomex Group said the document, delivered Aug. 14, provides an outline for the Algonquin Highlands Fire Department for the next five to 10 years.

It's designed to help forecast unforeseeable costs and prevent future large costs through maintenance and pre-planning, while ensuring the department meets all firefighting guidelines and provincial legislation.

Gervais said the station in Dorset, located at 1060 Main St. across from the rec centre, is 47 years old, having been constructed in 1978. He suggested the building is nearing the end of its life.

"The main issues are limited space… it doesn't have any shower facilities, has a limited common area and has drainage issues," Gervais wrote in his report. "The facility is also not compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act."

No estimates were provided on costs to replace the 3,344 sq. ft. site, though Algonquin Highlands mayor Liz Danielsen confirmed it is on council's radar.

"We acknowledge there is some work to be done, particularly at Dorset… we're keeping an eye on available land and are starting to think about what we can do. We're looking at other departments, possible partnerships, and how we can move forward with this," Danielsen said,

Algonquin Highlands new fire master plan recommends immediately replacing the Dorset fire hall. *File.*

with Station 60 having a good working relationship with the Lake of Bays fire department.

The Stanhope station, constructed in 1973, and the Oxtongue Lake station, built between 1980-85 and upgraded in 2019, are both "adequate for current service levels," Gervais added.

Despite their fair current condition, he recommended council start saving now for future seven-to-eight figure replacements, while also encouraging funding be made available to replace roofs, windows and key infrastructure as needed.

Finding a way to bolster staffing levels was also advised. Currently, the department is operating at 90 per cent capacity. It's permitted to carry up to 55 staff, though only had 50 as of Aug. 14 – 25 based out of Stanhope, 15 in Dorset and 10 in Oxtongue Lake. Fire chief Michael French said the department has a mutual aid agreement with Dwight to assist with any structure fires.

Danielsen said she has been worried about staffing levels for years. Gervais said it's a byproduct of the Highlands' demographics, with 40.8 per cent of the township's population as of the 2021 Census – 2,588 full-time and 2,400 seasonal residents – over the age of 65.

"It is not uncommon for a department to lose 10-20 per cent of its volunteer workforce each year, which means a complete turnover is possible within five to 10 years," Gervais said. "Historically, the department has faced recruitment and retention challenges… [it] should consider offering its firefighters additional benefits, such as pension plans."

Investigating response times, Gervais said they had increased from an average of 19 minutes and 37 seconds in 2019 to 38 minutes and 25 seconds in 2023. The department responded to nine fires in 2019, four in 2020, three in 2021, 10 in 2022 and three in 2023. The average dollar loss was $1,060,800.

Gervais' other key recommendations included increasing the wash capacity of the extractor at Stanhope used to clean equipment; developing a replacement plan for all self-contained breathing apparatus; forming peer support and critical incident stress management teams to assist with firefighters' mental health; and improving technology so all stations have access to pre-incident planning information before arriving on-scene.

French and CAO Angie Bird said the township has already made progress on some of the recommendations and would provide quarterly updates to council, which Danielsen liked.

"I do think this is something we need to track on a regular basis to know where we're at and where we can still improve," the mayor said.

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MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

• *Of Light and Life* by Michael Dumas is on display in the Agnes Jamieson Gallery until September 13. The exhibit features over 70 original works. Copies of Michael's recently published book *Algonquin Legacy - The Art of Michael Dumas* are available for sale in the Gallery.

• The Minden Hills Cultural Centre is pleased to partner with Pride in the Highlands for the 2nd annual Voice of Pride Art Exhibition, curated by local artist Scott Michael Walling. The exhibit will be on display until August 30.

• Join us on Thursday, August 28 for our last outdoor movie night of the summer! We will be presenting The BFG (2016). Don't forget your lawn chair, blanket, and snacks! If it rains, the event will still take place indoors in the Welch Room. No pre-registration is required. This film is rated PG.

• The Minden Hills Museum and Heritage Village and Nature's Place are open Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am – 4 pm! Daily drop-in programs are offered at 11 am. Coming up later this week: Thursday – Crafty Hands Crocheting, Friday – Toddler Discovery Zone at 11 am and Ice Cream Making at 2 pm, Heritage Workshop – The Typewriter.

For information on all the programs and exhibits offered at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre: culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

• August 28 - Regular Council Meeting

• September 11 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

HOLIDAY CLOSURE

The following Township of Minden Hills offices will be closed on Monday, September 1, 2025:

• Municipal Administration Office (7 Milne St.)
• Fire Hall Administration Office (12418 Hwy. 35)
• Minden Hills Cultural Centre (176 Bobcaygeon Rd.)
• SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena (55 Parkside St.)

All waste disposal sites will be open and will operate on Sunday hours.

Our offices and facilities will resume regular hours on Tuesday, September 2, 2025.

RECYCLE YOUR HOUSEHOLD BATTERIES

Don't throw your used batteries in the garbage—keep them out of the landfill. Household batteries (AA, AAA, C, D, 9V, and button cells) can be safely recycled at any of our waste disposal sites. Recycling batteries helps recover valuable materials and prevents harmful chemicals from entering the environment.

WATCH FOR WORKERS

Construction season is here. Keeping a work site safe includes everyone. Slow down and watch for workers when approaching road work sites.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

We are currently recruiting for the following vacancies:

• Building Inspector/Bylaw Officer
• Seasonal Roads Labourer
• Student Arena Attendants
• Casual Community Services Operator
• Part Time Waste Facilities Operator
• Full Time Roads Equipment Operator

Visit www.mindenhills.ca/careers for more information and how to apply

FALL REGISTRATION

The fall drop-in program schedule will be starting on Tuesday September 2, 2025. Take a look at the full schedule online at www.mindenhills.ca/recreation or in person at the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena.

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Highlander news

Minden manufacturer leaving County

By Lisa Gervais

A long-time Minden-based manufacturer is leaving the County.

TekVest announced earlier this month it is leaving its premises on County Road 121 near Howland Junction for the Kitchener-Waterloo region.

Founder and former co-owner, as well as current shareholder, Steve Brand, said the move means laying off staff, which has ranged from six to 10 people depending on orders.

The property is now also up for sale.

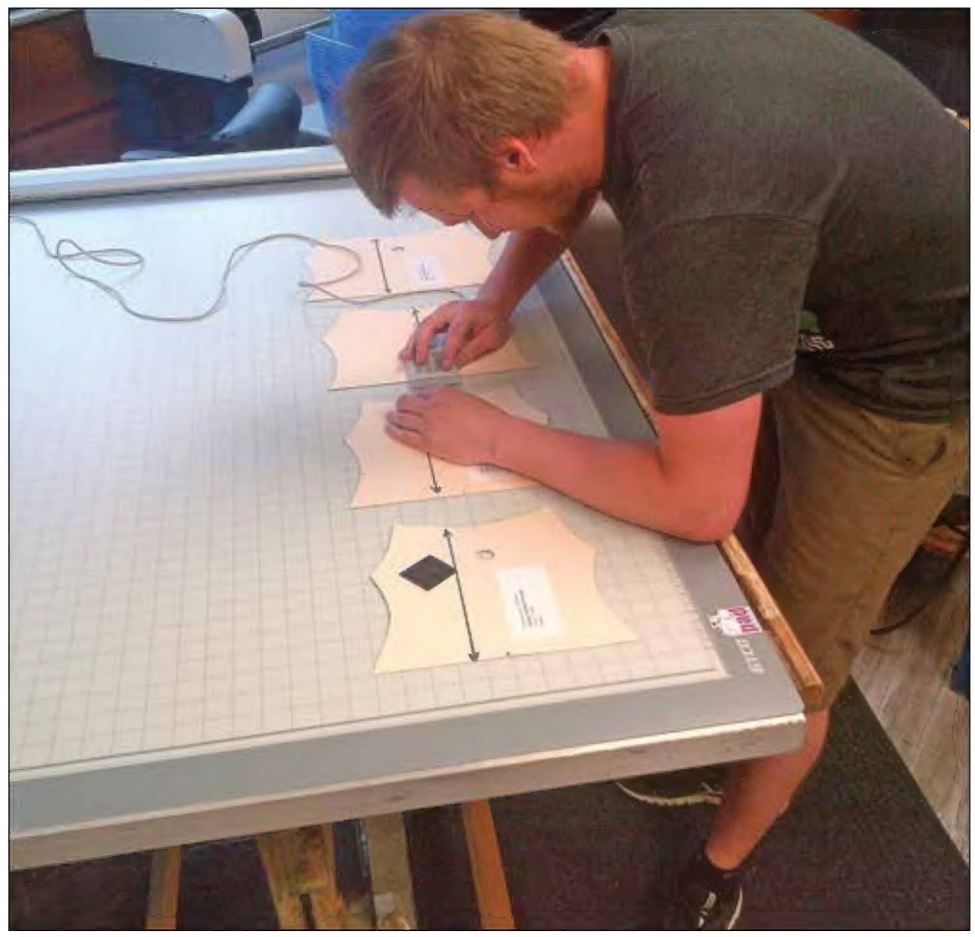
TekVest makes protective wear (body armour) for the power sports community and have an international reputation as an industry leader. Steve Brand and co-owner Nancy Brand had manufactured in the Highlands since 2000, after starting the business in 1996. They sold to new owners three years ago.

They announced the relocation Aug. 14.

"Thank you for a great 29-year run thus far. Part of this transition means that our Minden plant will be closing and the building is now for sale," the two said.

Brand said it's been tough going due to a variety of reasons, including mild winters (as they make equipment for snowmobilers), difficulty finding local workers, and today's tariffs.

"It is difficult being a manufacturer in Ontario, let alone in Haliburton County. The new owner decided to move the operation to his hometown in Kitchener. He's going to rebuild a team down there," Brand told *The Highlander* Aug. 21.



An employee at work at the TekVest plant in Minden. *File.*

He said "few people want to work in this trade here," adding the business' youngest sewer is more than 50 years old. He added he had talked to Fleming College about making the plant a training site for textile cut and sew students but claims they were not interested. He added it could have been used for retraining adults in the textile industry. "You always need somebody to sew boat covers and trailer covers. That can't be exported to China."

He said in their time in Minden Hills, half a dozen people retired from the company. "They wanted to come to work. We had an interesting product with 90 per cent of sales to the U.S."

However, he said with the trade war, the "market is stressed right now. All of our import costs are up as 90 per cent of our raw materials come from the States. We can't make the numbers work."

That said, the company will continue to manufacture from southwestern Ontario, where Brand said there is "access to more talent and staff.

"We have a world-class product that has a world-class reputation. We've saved lives. We've prevented serious injuries and, in 29 years now, not had one liability claim. Not one lawsuit."

He is the listing agent for the property that he owns. He said it is already set up for a small manufacturing business; and a detached residence is permitted.

"Next year will be our 30th anniversary. We're still in business. We're just going through a hiccup with the global crisis, as are many businesses. There is a continued need for our products that have been in use for many years. Unfortunately. I've designed something that doesn't wear out and we have very loyal customers."

HIGHLANDS EAST NEWS

STR update

Junior planner, Kim Roberts, told Highlands East council Aug. 12 short-term rental licence applications continue to come in "steadily" and staff are working with applicants to bring their properties into compliance.

She noted that in the absence of a STR licensing clerk, staff have focused on processing pending applications and following up with complaints.

She said they'd received 17 complaints since the 24/7 monitoring hotline went live, with nine in the last 30 days before she prepared her report.

"Staff have placed orders on two properties and have been following up with a handful more to bring them into compliance. Staff have also received general complaints about STRs, which have been followed up with correspondence," Roberts said.

Coun. Angela Lewis asked about the types of complaints, and Roberts said three quarters were operating without a licence.

She noted two owners have not voluntarily applied for licences, "hoping (they) won't get caught or have some moral opposition to the program … seem to be willing to fight with us tooth and nail."

Deputy mayor Cec Ryall asked what they did in the case of parking violations. Roberts said OPP could be called if someone is blocking legal access to another property.

Overall, she said they'd identified 165 STRs in and around Highlands East with 95 applications. She said 36 applications were pending. Licensing fees are up to more than $48,000. As for municipal accommodation tax, Roberts told council they'd collected more than $16,000 to date.

(Highlands East news compiled by Lisa Gervais)

Highlander news

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A MESSAGE FROM

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Haliburton Highlands CHAMBER of COMMERCE

Where were the Wilbees?

By Lisa Gervais

Forget about where in the world Waldo is. Highlanders were wondering where in the world the Wilbees were last week as the local family got caught up in the Air Canada flight attendants' strike – sending them on an adventure – or should we say misadventure.

They're all home as of early last Friday morning, and Tamara Wilbee, who is Dysart et al's chief administrative officer, said the challenge now is to see if they can be reimbursed for any of the costs associated with the labour unrest that impacted their travel plans.

Wilbee, her mother, Joan Wilson, son, Andrew Wilbee, daughter-in-law, Taylor O'Leary, and two granddaughters were supposed to fly home from Athens, Greece Aug. 16.

The family had been on a trip with O'Leary's dad, brother and sister-in-law – who were unaffected by the strike interruption.

"We were supposed to leave on the 16th and we got a text on the 14th or 15th saying there could be some problems because Air Canada was ramping up," Wilbee said. "Then on the 16th, not until the morning of the flight, we got another message saying they'd cancelled it. Later that afternoon, they sent a text saying they'd checked for three days before and after and there weren't any flights available."

She chuckled at the three days before, as they would have had to have time travelled back to make any of those flights anyway.

She said they were all sitting at dinner when they got the flight cancellation notice, "and I kind of immediately lost my appetite."

They were staying at a Holiday Inn "so that wasn't sustainable because it was $600 a night for the two rooms." They booked another night in Athens, at a more affordable Airbnb near a beach.

"We were worried because everybody kept saying we'd get reimbursed, but there were different rulings. What if you aren't, and you have spent all this money."

Wilbee said with no immediate Air Canada flights, "we were on our own to figure out how to get home. With three iPads and three iPhones working together, we managed to secure a series of flights through Paris and Dublin."

However, she said flight costs tripled after the strike started and it cost more to get home than it did for their entire trip to Greece, including a cruise.

The intrepid travellers, including Tamara Wilbee, before embarking on a cruise in Greece. *Submitted.*

With all the extra accommodation and flights and food, she said they'd maxed out all of their credit cards. "I can't imagine what we would have done if we didn't have some credit."

It was confusing, and the long road home took them to places such as Paris, Zurich, Dublin and Halifax.

There were other hiccups, such as the original Dublin to Toronto flight being cancelled. Their bags were lost in Halifax, going to Montreal, while they went to Toronto.

Despite it all, they made the most of each and every stop, such as visiting Paris Disney in between flights and seeing the sights of Dublin. "Make the best of everything if I can," Wilbee said.

She added they ended up in places they had slotted for future trips.

"Can't really complain too much," she said with a laugh.

When she got back to work Aug. 25, she said co-workers had decorated her office with balloons and streamers, and a world map circling all the places the Wilbees had been. "It's pretty nice.

"I went into the Eagle Lake Country Market on Sunday, and the girl in there said, 'oh, she's just back from here, and she was there', I was so impressed everyone knew the whole story.

"I'd still fly again. Have lots of room on your credit card when you go, though."

MINDEN HILLS NEWS

Service delivery review

While supportive of the next stage of a service delivery review at the County, Minden Hills council told County CAO Gary Dyke July 31 they had some concerns around timing.

Mayor Bob Carter said there was "a whole host of other things staff is completely booked to do," so didn't see the need to rush the process. He did not think it was necessary to complete the review to meet Minden Hills' budget deadlines for 2026.

Coun. Tammy McKelvey agreed, saying she too was conscious of staff workloads, and didn't want to see a report fast-tracked that could end up collecting dust on a shelf.

She added she agreed with components of the second stage, such as not having five official plans, which she said was "ridiculous." She also concurred with taking a look at human resources and engineering, but was not convinced about communications.

But Dyke said no work was wasted work. He said if something did not pass this time around, it might be looked at in future. "It's baseline work to go forward, whether implemented by council (or not). There is value going forward."

Carter said he was happy to turn phase two to the service delivery review steering committee and council agreed. *(Minden Hills news compiled by Lisa Gervais)*

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ALGONQUIN HIGHLANDS NEWS

Oh chute

Algonquin Highlands council is proceeding with plans to remove the Hawk Lake Log Chute in 2026, though will hire a structural engineer to see if any portion of the historic design can be saved.

In April, Chris Card, the township's parks, recreation and trails manager, said the log chute – the only one of its kind in Ontario - is in a state of disrepair and continues to deteriorate. The structure was initially built in 1861 and was used by logging companies around Cat, Crab, Hawk, Kennisis, Paint and Trout lakes until the 1930s.

It was damaged during a 2017 flood and has been closed ever since.

Hawk River Construction quoted $53,730 to remove the structure in April, though Card said the estimate was only good for 30 days. Those costs excluded any required environmental permitting.

Card said he was aiming to have the work complete by next June. To facilitate, the township will have to work with Parks Canada to have water shutoff at nearby Big Hawk Lake Dam, with the removal potentially impacting downstream locations. Card said the recommended shutoff is at least five days.

Deputy mayor Jennifer Dailloux said she was loathe to lose one of the community's best historic and cultural assets, suggesting the township retain a small portion of the chute "as a placeholder" to ensure it will be reconstructed. This is where the engineer will investigate.

Mayor Liz Danielsen said there has been interest from the Halls and Hawk Lakes Property Owners Association to fundraise for a rebuild, though noted that would likely be a years-long endeavour. Card said the township still has design plans from 2019 for a replacement.

He noted it would be safest to delay any rebuild until after Parks Canada has upgraded the Big Hawk Lake Dam, estimated within the next 10 to 15 years.

"It's not known for certain that a new dam would end up going in the exact same place, so for any future rebuild considerations, it's reasonable to assume the log chute may have to be moved along with the dam," Card said.

Landing over budget

Tender results for the Russell Landing rehabilitation on Kawagama Lake came in 231 and 277 per cent over budget, Card told council.

The township earmarked $175,000 for the project in May, but received bids of $405,046 from A2Z Civil and $485,606 from Beton Inc.

Card proposed three possible amendments to the project that could bring costs down – removing stairs that would provide access to varying water levels from the retaining wall area; remove a loading and unloading zone; and having municipal staff haul and dispose of materials, rather than the contractor.

Council opted to maintain the first two pieces, though directed Card to negotiate with the low bidder to see if he can bring the price down. In the absence of any savings, the $230,046 shortfall will be drawn from the docks and landings reserve, which sits at $245,947.

Water and a tower

Card warned that access to public water systems will be limited Sept. 8 and 9.

The township is bringing a company in to move through all of its locations and clean municipal wells in a couple of weeks.

"This is a routine disinfection process for our wells; however, it will affect access," Card said. "We're ensuring there's always somewhere available where people can get water at our public access points."

He noted parks staff will also begin taking reservations at the Dorset Tower at 9 a.m. Sept. 2 for the busy fall colour season. The structure will reopen Sept. 20 following the installation of new lightning strike equipment. People can schedule visits until Oct. 26. *(Algonquin Highlands news compiled by Mike Baker)*

Editorial opinion

TheHighlander
Published by The Highlander Newspaper Limited

OUR MISSION

To tell the story of Haliburton County each week.

To be a source of information and inspiration through stories and ideas.

To report on issues, people and events important to the community.

To reflect and promote pride in the culture, people and landscape of The Highlands.

To encourage Highlanders to believe in themselves, in our community, and in their power to make our place in the world better every day.

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Audited Circulation 8,871 (Jan 1 - June 30, 2017)
Canadian Media Circulation Audit - Canadian Community Newspapers Association

We acknowledge and appreciate financial assistance from the Government of Canada

Why we still need Pride

By Lisa Gervais

I dropped by the Minden library last Tuesday for Drag Queen Storytime.

While waiting for the event to begin, I noticed a staff member stationed at the back door of the cultural centre. She said she was there in case of trouble. I sort of scoffed, thinking no one would show up to cause a fuss. Weren't we, as a community, over that?

Special guest Auntie Plum took her seat to read to some kids, and adults, as part of Pride in the Highlands. The library said it was intended to instill a love of books and reading for children and their families through an imaginative storytelling experience. The message was clearly about love, with the number one takeaway being 'be a good human.'

Once I grabbed my photos, I left.

It was only afterwards that I ran into an acquaintance at the Rainbow Streetfest in Minden who told me there had been a commotion at the end of the event. She sent me some photos.

In the first, a man is holding a cardboard sign, reading 'warning, Pride is what got Satan kicked out of heaven. The good news is, if you repent and seek The Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved."

She said there were a myriad of emotions experienced by library staff, attendees, and the Pride in the Highlands committee members staffing the Pride tent where the man was standing.

She said she found the man to be passive aggressive and intimidating.

She added the theme of this year's Pride week was 'together we rise' and she was proud to say that a number of allies challenged the man, and asked him to leave. When he refused, someone called the police. The man was handcuffed and removed from the premises.

OPP confirmed this Tuesday they arrested a man under the Trespass to Property Act and escorted him off the property without incident.

The same protestor apparently showed up at Drag Queen Storytime in Haliburton on the Thursday.

What this tells me is - some people are not over it … they refuse to accept the Haliburton Highlands is a place of inclusivity.

Thankfully, this protestor, and some who did not like decorations in downtown Minden, are a slim minority.

Last week, we had a story in which co-chairs Allan Guinan and Chris Hewson said this could be Pride in the Highlands' final hurrah.

Guinan said the group has seen interest dwindle in recent years. Without more help, he fears the organization could be on its last legs. He noted the committee is shrinking, volunteer numbers are down, and the movement seems to be losing steam.

That would be a shame as the local Pride group would be celebrating 10 years in 2016.

However, Hewson is challenging the community to get involved.

While Guinan pondered whether there was still a need for Pride in the Highlands, given the progress the group had made over the past decade, he said the recent incidents had reinvigorated him.

We'd have to agree with him.

We still need Pride.

HUMANS OF HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS

Peaceful, beautiful, not too urban

By Susan Tromanhauser

Of all the places in the world to be, there is no better place than Lake Kashagawigamog.

At least according to Philip Joseph. And he should know, as the 18-year-old has already traveled the world.

Joseph has been coming to the family cottage on Kash his entire life. Purchased by his grandfather, it is an annual summer gathering spot for the family. Home for Joseph is London, not that London which is a drive away, but rather the London which is a plane ride away. Yes, London, England. However, there is no British accent in this young man's speech as he has adapted Canadian intonation from Grades 10 and 11 at Brentwood College School, a boarding school in Vancouver.

It was at Brentwood he met some lifelong friends from Toronto, which is another reason he looks forward to his annual return to Ontario. When asked about heading to Toronto for more excitement, such as stadium concerts, Joseph reports he prefers raves to concerts, noting "the raves won't let you in after the age of 21."

But Joseph doesn't lack age-appropriate friends while spending time in the Highlands. As a youth, he spent summers at Camp Kandalore on Lake Kabakwa in Algonquin Highlands, where he met fellow campers who return to the area each summer. While now too old for camp, but not quite old enough for any bar scene, Joseph and his friends "just go around town" hanging out in downtown Haliburton. One restaurant in particular he has come to enjoy is "the new Italian place," Juna on Highland Street. But what Joseph really loves to do is spend time at the cottage with his family. His eyes light up when talking about wakeboarding and learning to water ski. Joseph's family has other property in Saudi Arabia, but he much prefers life on Lake Kash as "Saudi Arabia is too hot and you can't wakeboard there."

When asked if there is somewhere else he prefers, Joseph hesitates and then starts scrolling through his phone to show off pictures of beaches in El Salvador, his mother's home country. Joseph insists the beaches in El Salvador are the most beautiful in the world. Joseph admits in the winter he would prefer to ski in the French Alps, but his favourite wintertime memory is in the Highlands. He remembers, clearly, learning to ski at Sir Sam's. He fondly remembers a full day of skiing with family, followed by a large plate of poutine in the Sir Sam's lodge.

When summer is over, Joseph will return to London where he is about "to complete his sixth form, like Grade 13" and is preparing for university. His plan is to follow in his father's footsteps and become an economist.

Philip Joseph enjoys summer in Haliburton. *Photo by Susan Tromanhauser.*

But returning to Lake Kash each summer is definitely in his plans. To Joseph, the Highlands are ideal, "peaceful, beautiful and not too urban." In fact, Joseph looks forward to the day when he can bring his own children here.

THEHIGHLANDER.CA

Editorial opinion

PHOTOS OF THE WEEK

Randy Moratz was cursing his luck after being caught in nature's version of rush hour traffic on County Road 21 recently.

LETTERS

Everywhere a sign

Dear editor,

I know that when I leave our place in the city to come back to Haliburton, it's nice having the traffic noise go away, it's nice to see so many trees and the wildlife and all those big signs and buildings are in the rearview mirror.

What's not nice is getting here, turning on to Trapper's Trail Road and you are invaded by signs; on the trees, on any poles, and along the roads. The signs are various sizes and for every type of business and real estate. I thought that realtors were to take the sign down when the property was sold, or do they just leave it for the next time?

I also thought that Dysart et al had a sign bylaw. I asked once and they said they did but they didn't have equipment that would go up that high.

Earlier this summer, there was 20 signs. When we turned onto the road today, I noticed way more than 20.

When leaves are on the trees, some signs aren't totally visible but when the leaves start falling, it will look like the roads you have to drive if you go south of the border.

I hope council takes the time to have a look and take them down and use social media to remind people that signs don't belong on trees and poles.

Phyllis McCulloch
Dysart et al

Where is courtesy?

Dear editor,

What has happened to kindness and caring for each other?

A few weekends ago, my son-in-law was enroute to a campsite when not one, but three, of his trailer tires blew. Sadly, no one stopped to offer help and, to make matters worse, they were yelled at and swore at, for holding up traffic, even though they were as far off the highway as possible.

My son-in-law was trying to make a good weekend for his son, who is getting married soon. Fortunately, there were several guys with him who came to his rescue.

I do hope none of you who passed by are ever in that situation, or if you are, someone stops to offer assistance.

We are here to help each other.

Janice Carr
Minden Hills

Enjoying Sawdust Stories

Dear editor,

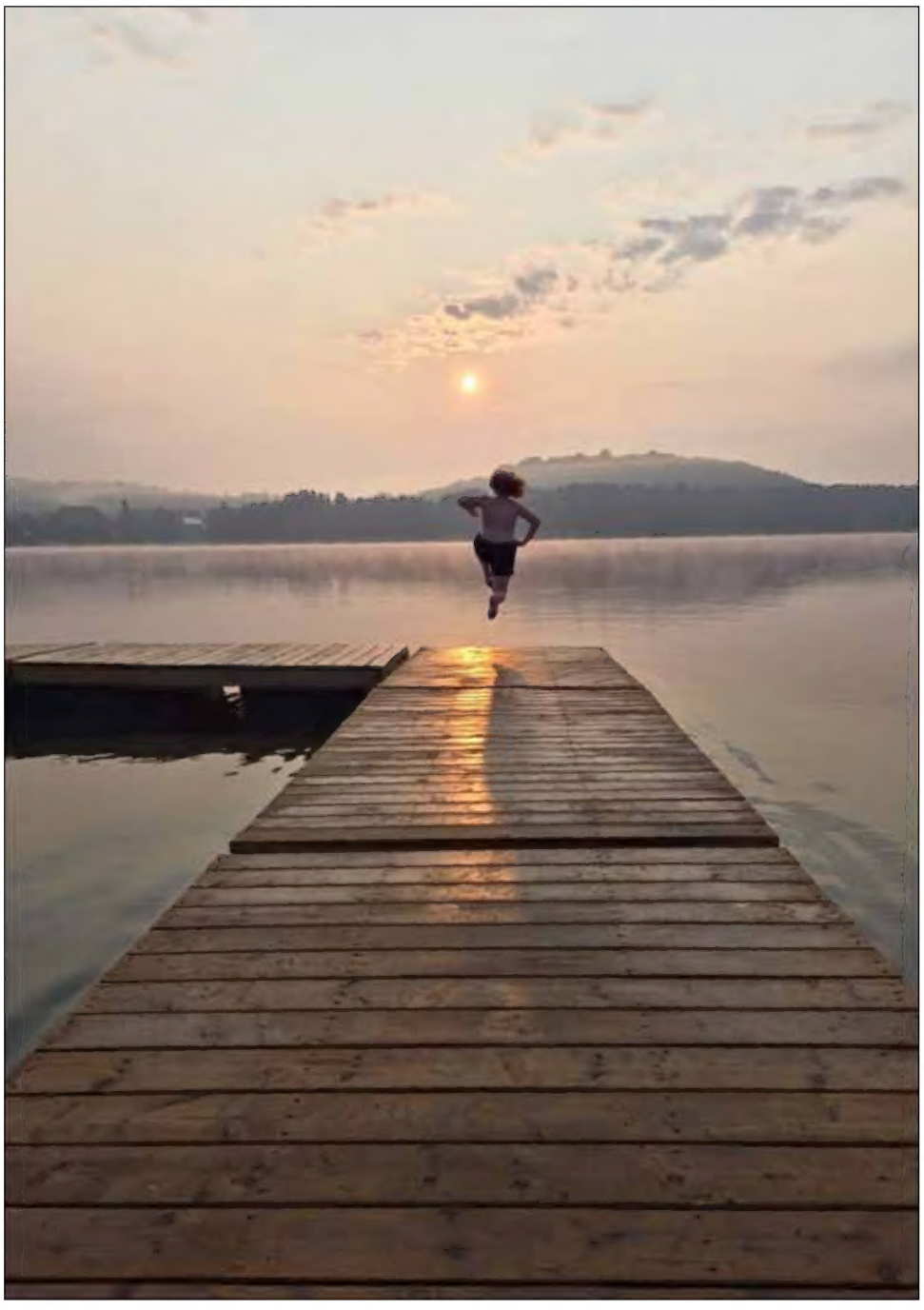
As a past runner of five marathons, I found Darren Lum's inclusion of the analogy 'showing up in all weather conditions', resonated with me.

I remember many runs starting at 4:30 a.m. due to having to be at work for 8 a.m. It reminded me of the gruelling preparation over many years to be able to complete these kinds of distances and not need any recovery time.

Overall, I'm just proud of Darren for his obvious hard work ethic.

With his attitude, I expect he will succeed at anything he sinks his teeth into. I wish other young people would take his learned experiences to heart.

Sheila Richardson
Minden Hills



Sarah Clarke captures summer winding down as Conner Clark Wiebe jumps into fall.

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Highlander environment

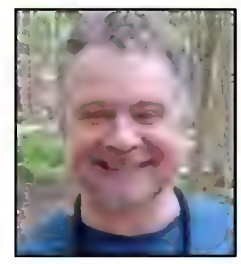
Phrag off

The Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (HHLT) welcomed people to its latest 'Partners in Conservation' event Aug. 14, cleaning up a phragmites outbreak at the Barry Wetland Reserve, near South Lake, in Minden. Eight people spent a morning digging out the invasive species, also known as the European common reed. Rick Whitteker, program coordinator, said phragmites was likely introduced to the area through ship ballast discharge decades ago. "This invasive species is a vigorous plant that rapidly takes over, creating dense patches that consume available growing space and push out native plants," Whitteker said. "It can alter wetland hydrology by lowering water levels and degrading wetland wildlife habitats. Dry stalks, over time, can also create a fire hazard." Two large patches were dug out and the roots were clipped off the stalks and bagged for disposal. Plant stalks were hauled away for burning and organic waste disposal. *(Mike Baker)*

Above: A team of eight volunteers, including HHLT's Rick Whitteker, Ralphe Baehre, Adrian Martin and five Ontario Stewardship Rangers, spent about three hours clearing phragmites, an invasive species, from the Barry Wetland Reserve in Minden recently. *Photo submitted.*

ADVERTORIAL

Why texture is key to a shaded garden



By Simon Payn

What do you do when you can't promise an abundance of flowers?

That's a problem I face here in Haliburton County. We have a lot of trees and when you have a lot of trees you have a lot of shade.

Shade-loving plants, for the most part, don't provide summer blooms. Their flower action comes in the spring.

Instead, I focus on texture and structure. The good news is that our native plants offer a wide variety of both.

I'm working on a shaded project, so I thought I'd share my ideas with you. Part of the site is on a septic bed, which brings its own constraints. The other part is closer to the cottage where a more formal design will work well.

Bring on the sedges!

As always, I start with my groundcover layer. In the absence of many flowers, this matrix has to offer a lot of value. I'm using four sedges. These often overlooked plants are similar to grasses, but green up early in the year. The huge variety of species (some 500 in North America alone) means there's a right plant for every right place.

I'm choosing Pennsylvania Sedge for the septic bed. This grass-like sedge grows about a foot high and, once established, will look like a tousled lush meadow. Imagine a magical clearing in the woods covered with long grass that moves in the wind, and amid the long grass sprout plants with their own different textures.

The area closer to the cottage will have three sedge species, each with a different texture, planted in nine single-species groundcover blocks. There's Rosy Sedge, with its fine, delicate leaves, Graceful Sedge with its spiky crown and seed heads that poke up above the foliage, and Plantainleaf Sedge, with its unusually broad leaves - like mini hostas.

I'm using Canada Violet as a secondary groundcover. Its leaves create contrast to the grass-like blades of sedge and its long-lasting white and pink flowers will bloom into summer. It will weave among the sedges, easily filling gaps.

I love a grass called Bottlebrush Grass, which is doing very well at Lucas House in Haliburton. You can imagine how it looks. It has an upright form, so I'll grow it amid the sedges, allowing them to fill in the gaps underneath. Bottlebrush Grass will provide a spiky contrast to lower, arching sedges.

Now it's time to turn to the herbaceous perennials, and here we're looking at spring bloomers for the most part. A favourite is Early Meadowrue. Its flowers are subtle, but its leaves are where the action is - a delicate cilantro growing in drifts.

When people think of shade, they think of ferns. I'm using two species in this project. I'm using Ostrich Fern sparingly - it can be aggressive - but its strong form makes for good architecture. Then I'm adding repeating clumps of Christmas Fern to integrate the site.

Adding architecture

You can consider ferns structural, but I'm also including some shrubs. Pagoda Dogwood is named for its distinct tiered branches. This species will be a centrepiece, so I'm planting one that's already grown quite large. Its size will put it out of the reach of deer, which is super-important at this site. Then I'm adding a couple of Spicebush specimens. They're deer-resistant and create an attractive rounded form that will contrast with the more pointed ferns and sedges.

Add a few more spring and fall-flowering perennials and the design is done. Careful placement of textures will be key. I'll need to make sure there's enough interest without a clash that will overwhelm the senses.

This design will prove shade is no barrier to great landscaping. Who needs dazzling coneflowers when you've got all this?

Simon Payn is the owner of Haliburton-based natural garden company, Grounded. To find out more, visit groundedgardens.ca.

Highlander arts

Exhibit takes people on tour of Highlands

By Mike Baker

Rails End Gallery curator, Laurie Jones, says there's a perfectly good explanation why people may have noticed an influx of artists in area parks or along local lakefronts lately, with an easel in-hand painting away.

'En Plein Air Haliburton' returns for its second show at the community's downtown public art gallery next month, with Jones saying dozens of painters have been hard at work preparing for the juried exhibition.

The initiative celebrates the "age-old tradition" of painting outdoors in the open air, Jones said. It follows last year's inaugural event, which launched with displays in-person at 23 York St. and online. More than 40 artists participated.

"Last year was a big success. It brought out such an explosion of artistic energy and really got people excited to complete their assignments among nature," Jones said.

"When I asked everyone if it was something they wanted to do again, it really wasn't a question or a choice – everyone was aligned in saying this is something we absolutely have to bring back."

Different from typical plein air shows, where works are completed during a scheduled time or event, Jones said artists can submit any finished piece from 2024 or 2025. Providing it was done outside in Haliburton County.

Entries must include both the name of the piece and location it was made. People can submit one piece for $25 or two for $35. The submission deadline is Sept. 3.

Jones said she and fellow County-based artist Rosanna Dewey will serve as jurors, selecting 20 pieces for the in-person exhibition at Rails End, running Sept. 19 to Nov. 8. All entries will be showcased in an online show. The top prize for 'Best in Show', won last year by Rod Proust, is $500, with approximately $2,000 worth of goodies up for grabs.

Because of the hype that followed last year's event, Jones said there's been an increased interest in plein air painting among Rails End members. She and Dave Kerr have hosted several impromptu painting events through summer, giving people the chance to try the medium in a group setting.

There have also been weekly 'painting the past' sessions at the Haliburton Highlands Museum on Friday afternoons through summer, with "happy painters" like Wendi Fox and Yasmine Schoenke attending. Jones recently hosted a plein air painting tutorial Aug. 9 during Haliburton Rotary Summerfest.

"Last year, we did virtually nothing leading up – we just told people we wanted a show. This time we've done a lot of enhanced programming to try and encourage people to get outside and paint. There's a different energy that flows through the work that you just don't get when you're inside.

Jones hopes to create a virtual map of all painting locations on the website.

For more details, visit railsendgallery.com.

Artists Wendi Fox and Yasmine Schoenke worked on their 'En Plein Air Haliburton' submissions during a recent outing at Glebe Park. *Submitted.*

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Highlander arts

Pride on display

It was a packed house at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre Aug. 22 as people came out for the reception for the second-annual Voice of Pride art exhibition. Curated by County-based artist Scott Walling, the exhibit features 17 LGBTQ+ artists who showcased their talents in various forms. The display debuted Aug. 12 and will remain in place, in the Welch Room, until Aug. 30. *(Mike Baker)*

Left: Curator Scott Walling poses beside Fernando Diaz de Leon Rendon and his mixed media piece *Cosmos.* Right: Kim Beavis Sanderson had three of their works selected for the show, showing off their drawing and digital animation skills. *Photos submitted.*

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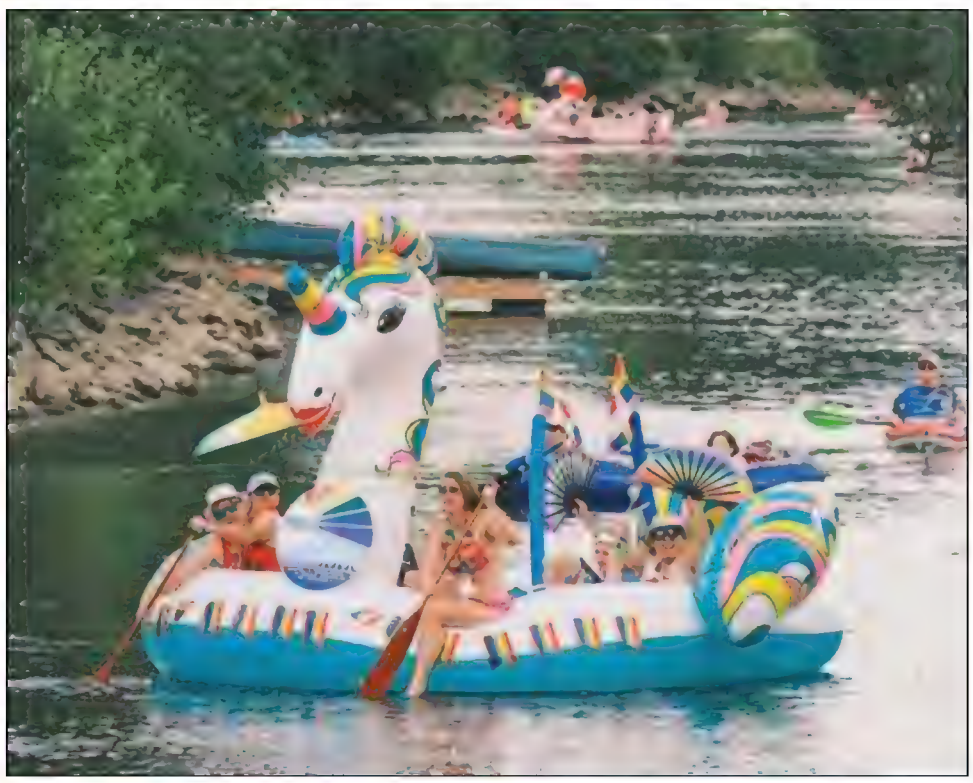
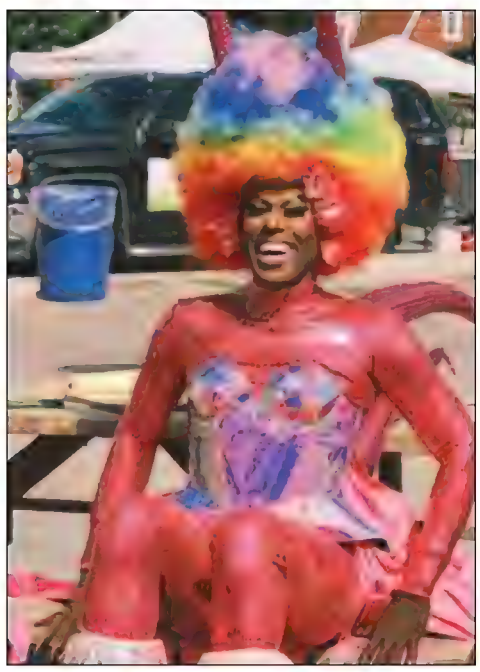
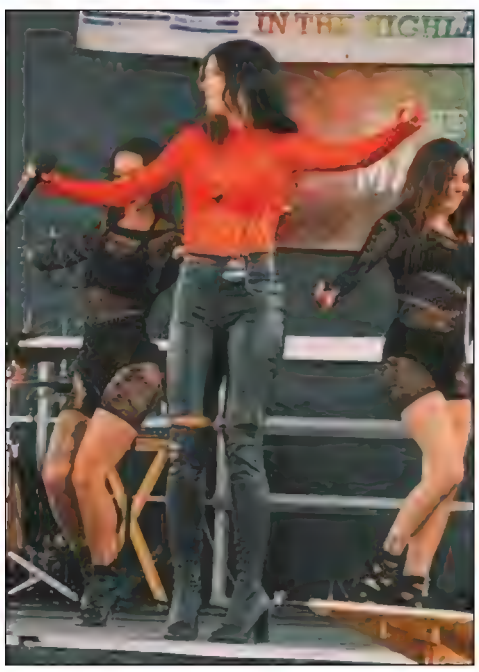
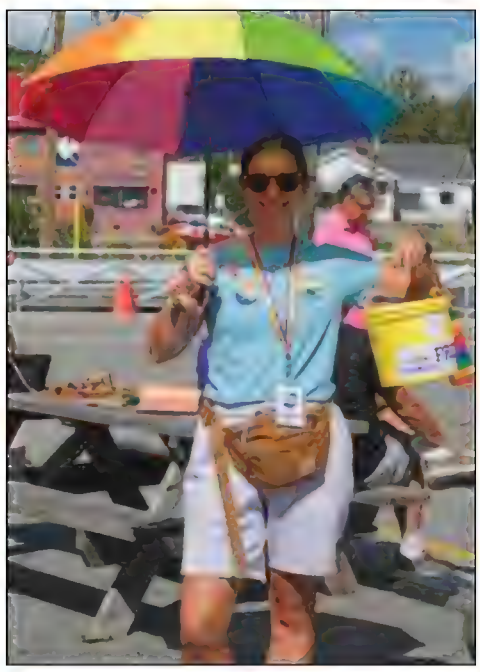
Highlander events









Minden wrapped in pride

Downtown Minden was party central Aug. 26 as Pride in the Highlands brought its weeklong Pride-themed festivities to a close with the annual Rainbow Streetfest. This year, organizers brought a stage to Water Street, with musicians and dancers keeping the good times going from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The day also saw the return of the Minden River Run, with people challenged to throw on their brightest colours and lounge on an inflatable while floating down the Gull River. *(Mike Baker)*

Top left: AJ Mundie fans himself with Pride – a rainbow-coloured fan – during the Minden River Run on Sunday. Top right: One of many Pride-themed displays floating down the Gull River. Bottom left: Dutch-Haitian drag performer Love Masisi, real name Pierre Antoine Alexandre who was a contestant on the second season of Drag Race Holland, was a special guest at Streetfest. Bottom second: Canadian popstar Dani Doucette performed a musical set. Bottom third: Shannon Howart used her rainbow umbrella to escape the sun. Bottom right: A four-legged friend shows its support for Pride. *Photos by Sally Huang.*

Highlander events

With 150+ riders on the trails this year, the 11th Annual Wilberforce ATV Ride was a true success. Your support helps us give back through curling programs, school breakfasts, and our neighbourhood food bank. Thank you to our amazing sponsors.

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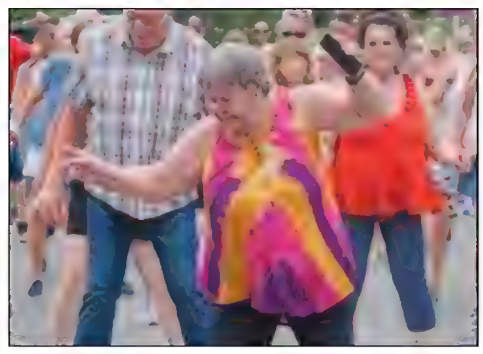

In, out, shake it all about

No, it wasn't a flash mob greeting folks on Bobcaygeon Road in Minden Aug. 23 – it was an organized out-on-the-street line dancing event put on by Dance Happens Here Haliburton, Pride in the Highlands, and the Minden River Cone. A couple dozen people participated in the event, which ran from 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, led by DH3 instructor Jacqui Bell. *(Mike Baker)*

Top: Folks bust a move along the shores of the Gull River. Second row left: Della Redwood breaks out into a smile mid-routine. Second row right: Don Critchley takes a step. Bottom left: Friends Lee-ann and Kathleen share a moment. Bottom right: Jacqui Bell waves her hands in the air as she leads people through a routine.
Photos by Sally Huang.

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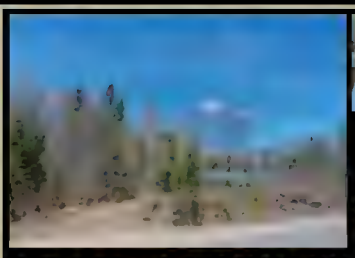

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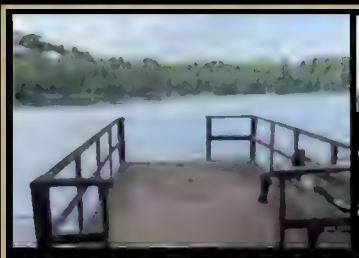

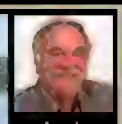

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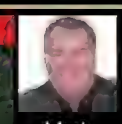

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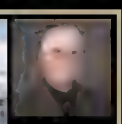

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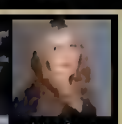

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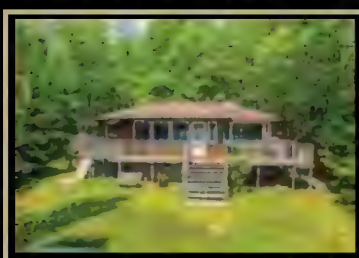

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Andrea Wilson** (705) 457-6694

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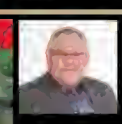

Andrew Hodgson** (705) 854-0130

Haliburton Lake $999,000
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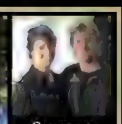

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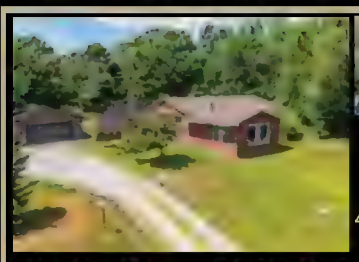

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Minden Home $695,000
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- Massive Garage/Workshop, Open Cpt
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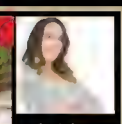

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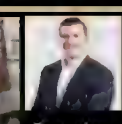

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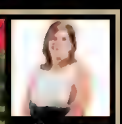

Karen Nimigon** (705) 457-6505

Pivot Lake $599,000
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Kelly Kay* (705) 457-6841
Kirsten Rae* (705) 854-1454

Soyers Lake $1,599,900
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Darlene Reil* (705) 854-2055

Irondale River $439,000
- Well kept 3 bedroom home with garage
- Workshop, "she" shed, walk to amenities
- Storage sheds sitting on banks of Irondale Riv.

Christine Sharp* (416) 566-1592

Storybook Log Cabin $595,000
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- 8+ acres of private woods, cozy porch
- Close to Tory Hill & trails

Greg Stamp* (705) 455-2231

Wigamog Road $659,000
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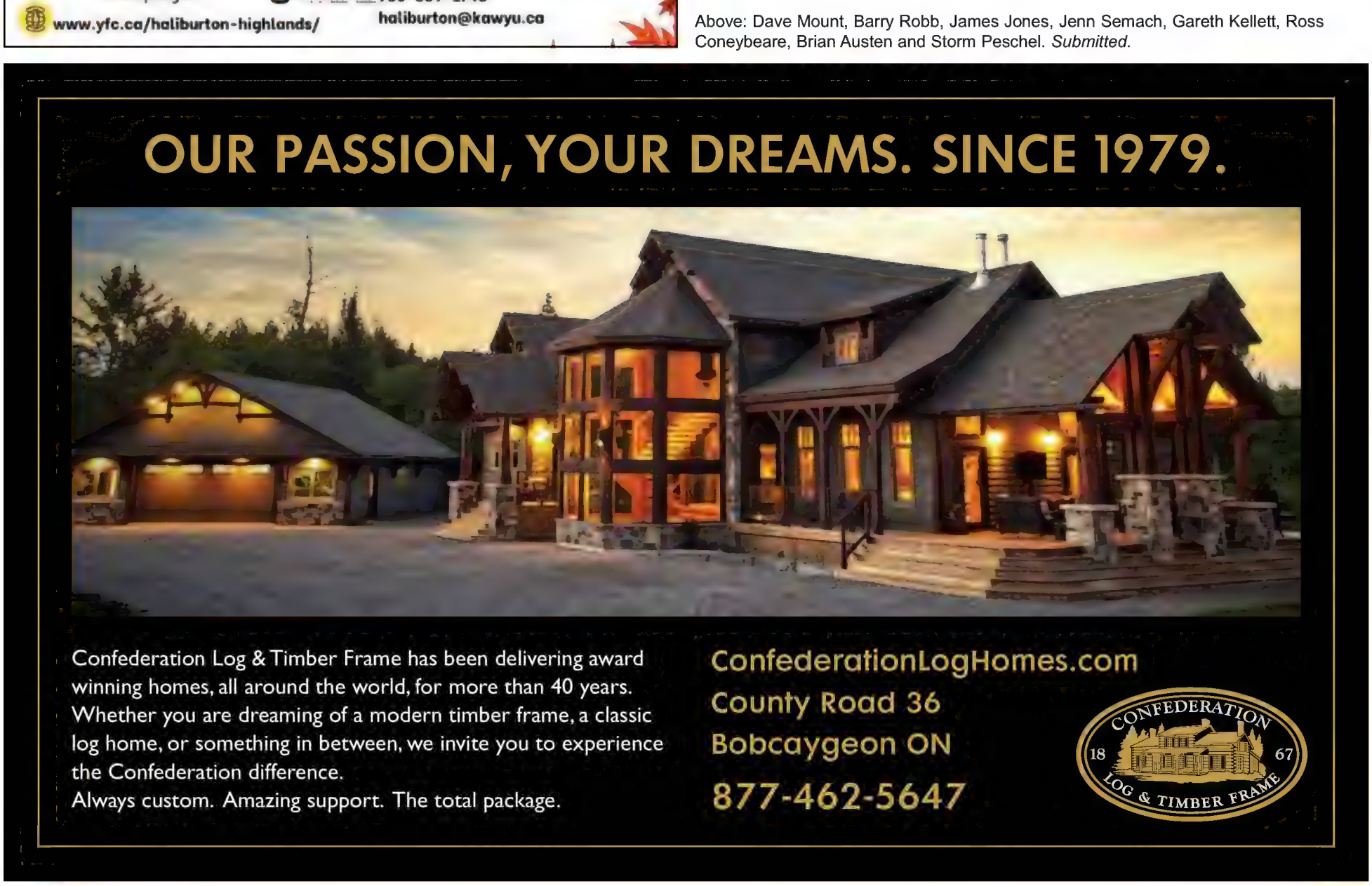
Highlander community

Masons give $8,000 to Walkabout

On Aug. 15, representatives from Victoria District Masons presented an $8,000 cheque to Walkabout Farm Therapeutic Riding Association. Victoria District is comprised of 10 Masonic Lodges, located in Minden, Haliburton, Coboconk, Sunderland, Beaverton, Woodville, Bobcaygeon, Lindsay, Omemee, and Fenelon Falls. Each year, there is a new district deputy grand master elected by the members of the district and he selects a charity to be the focus of his fundraising efforts for the year. This year - which ended in July - the deputy was James Jones from Arcadia lodge in Minden and he chose Walkabout as his charity, The monies presented represent donations from members of the district as well as a contribution from the Masonic Foundation of Ontario.

Above: Dave Mount, Barry Robb, James Jones, Jenn Semach, Gareth Kellett, Ross Coneybeare, Brian Austen and Storm Peschel. *Submitted.*



Highlander community

Miskwabi Area Community Association donates to food bank

On Aug. 16, MACA members enjoyed a "lovely" afternoon on Miskwabi Lake at one of their members' places for their annual wine and cheese meet, said membership director Phyllis McCulloch. "We hold this event every summer, usually a little later in the season, but changed it. Our members always tell us they attend and meet brand new people but the summer's over and they now have 'new friends' they won't see for a year. We moved it up, and about 115 members attended," McCulloch said. For the last eight years, they've encouraged members to bring donations for the Haliburton 4Cs Food Bank. Along with the food, they delivered a cheque for $820. *(Lisa Gervais)*

Above: Judy MacDuff of 4Cs with the MACA donation. *Submitted.*

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Sunday August 31
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3-5pm - Birthday Happy Hour $5/pint
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Thomas Contracting is looking ahead with a focus on innovation and sustainability. "Our goal is to keep evolving while staying true to our roots," said Keith. "We want to serve the community with the same integrity my grandfather instilled nearly a century ago."

With its strong legacy and forward-looking approach, Thomas Contracting remains a cornerstone of Haliburton County's construction industry - building solid foundations both for projects and for the community it calls home.

Happy Labour Day Weekend from everyone at Thomas Contracting - proudly building, together. #BuiltWithThomas

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Roasting time

Members of the Wilberforce Heritage Guild welcomed about 75 people to the Wilberforce Red Cross Outpost Aug. 15 for its annual corn roast. The event is held each year as an anniversary celebration for the site, which opened as the hamlet's only source of medical care in 1922. Live-in Red Cross nurses staffed the outpost until 1957, with various community and medical services keeping things going until 1963. More recently, the space has been transformed into a museum. It's open through the summer Wednesday to Monday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The guild raised approximately $2,400 through the event, which featured their annual quilt raffle. *(Mike Baker)*

Top: Cathy Agnew spent the evening cooking hot dogs for visitors. Second: Linda Ladd and Linda Nottage served cake and ice cream. Third: Visitors enjoying their freshly roasted corn. Bottom: The Loop Troupe put on several short farm-themed skits that Wilberforce Heritage Guild member, Barb Schofield, said were similar to old-school vaudeville-style routines. *Photos submitted.*

Hotel in the spotlight

The Dominion Hotel will be celebrating its 160th birthday on the Labour Day long weekend. On Aug. 7, about 25 people went on a localized journey through time as hotel owner Shawn Chamberlin told tales about the building's rich history. He talked about the hotel's role in the community in the late 1800s and early 1900s, as one of the only places for people to stay when visiting. Back then, hotels were required to offer shelter during the winter months, from December to April, for $1 per night. More recently, the space became somewhere for people to celebrate and create memories, by enjoying a meal around a table or taking in some evening entertainment. The talk was hosted by the Minden Hills Cultural Centre and was the final community heritage series event of the summer. *(Mike Baker)*

Left: Shawn Chamberlin, joined by his wife Elli, gave a comprehensive behind-the-scenes rundown on the history of the Dominion Hotel Aug. 7. Right: About 25 people attended the talk, held at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre. *Photos submitted.*

Home of Haliburton Grassroots

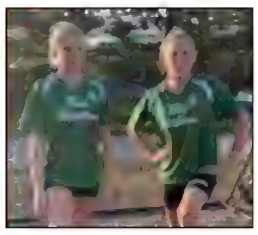
MVPS!

Aliyah Cox - Girls 10-11 - Navy Team

Easton Walker & Ander Brown - Boys 7-9 - Purple Team

Georgette Stewart & Sophia - Girls 7-9 - Kiwi Team

Hazel Townsend - Girls 7-9 - Silver Team



Jalynn Chambers & Fynnley Miscio - Girls 12-13 - Green Team

Phoenix Darling - Girls 7-9 - Purple Team

Skyla Pettes - Girls 10-11 - White Team

Sydney Holman - Coed 4-6 - Purple Team

Soccer-ing in the rain

Finally, Haliburton got the rain we had all been waiting for.

The long-anticipated showers mostly arrived last Tuesday evening - right in the middle of one of our glorious soccer matches. The sky opened, the evening turned wet and gloomy, and the rainfall was a refreshing and welcome surprise after all the hot, dry weather we have been enduring over the past several months.

Those who chose to brave the downpour played in high spirits as teams merged together to adapt to the smaller turnout of players, all while adjusting to the slippery grass underfoot and the slick soccer ball that seemed to have a mind of its own.

The 10-13-year-old boys had a blast as they 'voluntold' the coaches to step in as keepers, while the strikers launched devastating and relentless shots on goal for the entire match.

Nominating the coaches for MVPs at the end felt like the perfect recognition for the dedication and effort they have consistently shown this year.

Just up the road, the 7-9 boys kept the field alive with an outstanding turnout, showing off their enthusiasm as these young superstars learned to stay comfortable even in uncomfortable conditions.

Their motto quickly became, 'it is only water, now let us have fun.'

By Thursday evening, the grass was already looking greener and lusher, the air had cooled noticeably, and the girls and co-ed teams stepped onto the field with more energy and determination than anyone expected at this stage of the season.

With only one week left to go, the level of gameplay is reaching its absolute peak, and we are hopeful that next week will bring even more excitement and unforgettable moments for every single player. *(Submitted)*

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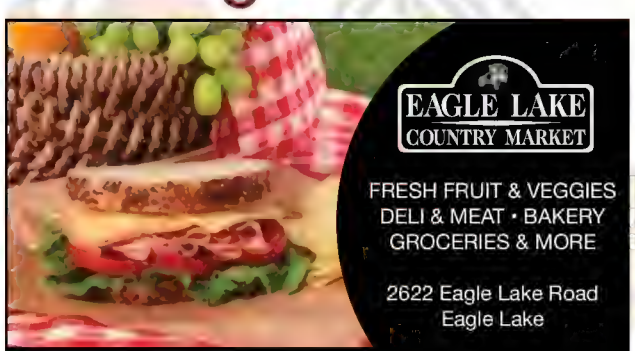

What's on

The Highlands Performing Arts Society

Announcement of Annual General Meeting
+
Call for new Members of our Board of Directors

The Highlands Performing Arts Society is also known as the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion
and as the
Theatre at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School

The Annual General Meeting of the Performing Arts Society will be held

Wednesday, September 24, 2025,
At 4:00pm

In the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion
(the theatre)
at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School.

Among other items the Board will receive names, both volunteers and nominations, for new Board Members of this Not For Profit mainstay of live performance in our community. Interest in joining the Board may be signified at the AGM or beforehand by contacting our chair Curtis Eastmure at 705-754-5388.

Attendees and nominees must be Members of the Highlands Performing Arts Society. Membership costs $10.00 and can be purchased at the door.

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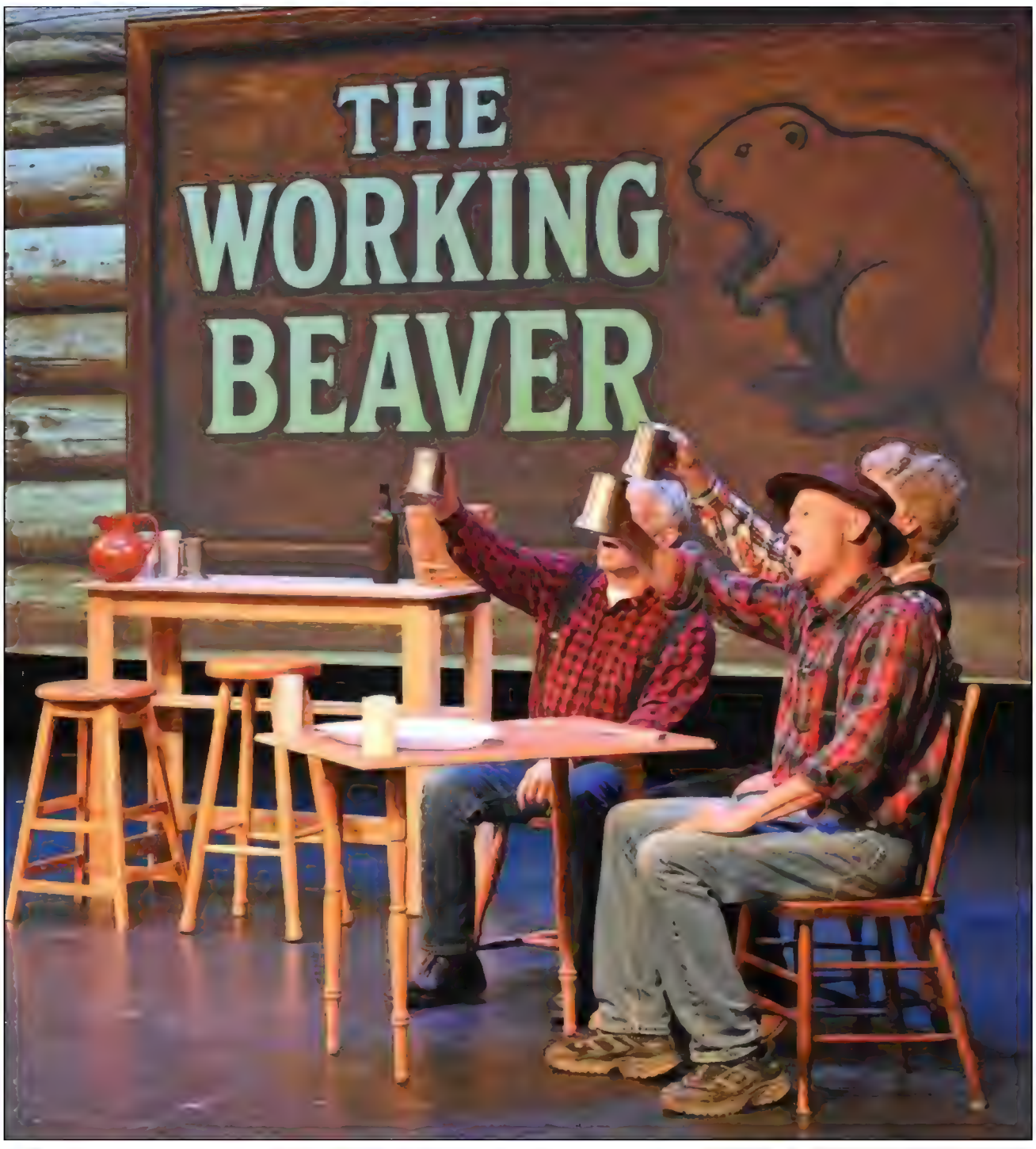

Sneak peek

Highlands Opera Community School gave the Haliburton County community its first taste of the year-long 'Let's Make an Opera' project Aug. 9. Setting up at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion, a full house was treated to excerpts from four of the stories that will be showcased during the end-of-year spectacle, planned for December. The mini productions include *Crane Lake Cleanse, Desmond and Lois, Women at the End of the Line*, and *Two Shots at the Working Beaver*. All stories were locally-written and composed and will feature County-based talent on-stage. Meanwhile, HOS wrapped up its 2025 summer season with *The Merry Widow* Aug. 25. *(Mike Baker)*

Top: Three members of the cast of Two Shots at the Working Beaver. Bottom left: George Thayer and Tom Regina face off during a tense scene in Two Shots at the Working Beaver. Bottom right: Hannah Klose and Jordan Kovacs let their voices fly during a Desmond and Lois scene. *Photos by Steve Sherwood.*

Siege mentality hits Haliburton Forest

By Lisa Gervais

Rather than the clang of steel, the whooshing of a synthetic sparring sword fills the air at base camp in Haliburton Forest.

Instructor Mark Wight of Dual Crown Haliburton and students, Logan McCreedy and Kaylea Mills, are engaged in sword fighting during a Medieval Monday at the Forest.

Wight, who works at the Forest, has brought his passion for sword fighting and armoured combat to anyone who wants to learn about the discipline.

Originally from Sarnia, Wight moved to Peterborough to attend Trent University. A longtime fan of video games, including *Legend of Zelda*, he said he walked into a thrift store and saw an ad for sword fighting lessons. He began training with Blades of Glory out of Hastings.

Wight said during his first time out, he "got raked over the coals; just doing the basics, learning how to stand, move, swing a sword, and that's all you did for two hours."

He's now been doing it for 10 years, even building his own armour, including handmade chain mail. He said the average shirt takes 100 hours to make.

He said the folks attracted to the sport are generally fans of fantasy novels, *Lord of the Rings* and *Star Wars*.

"It all comes down to, basically, swinging a sword-like object at somebody … what little boy hasn't picked up a stick and swung it like a sword?"

Mark Wight and Logan McCreedy in a swordfight. *Photo by Lisa Gervais*

Medieval Mondays at the Forest emanated in the spring of 2024. Clients called looking for a bachelor party event in the spring. However, the roads were closed because of snow and mud and nothing much was going on. He told management he could throw a medieval combat experience together and it was a hit.

He said Medieval Mondays had been slow to catch on. He will run it until the end of the summer, but, "if I have enough local people, I'm just going to keep going."

He loves the teaching, saying it's "one of those times where you really get to test if you actually know what you are doing. I have so many things built into my muscle memory; how I move and walk and handle things. I have to stop and go all the way back to the beginning.

"How do I show someone who's never done this before? Swinging a sword is not like swinging a baseball bat or a tennis racquet, things you can draw on but not the same. So, it benefits me. I have to start from scratch. I might have skipped something, so it's reteaching me."

When a student "gets it" he adds, "it's a giant swell in pride."

His pitch to get more people out?

"There's the physical benefits, there's the mental benefits. For me, it's my outlet, my release from life. It's getting out that passion; something they've always wanted to do even if they don't have any desire to go beyond just hanging out."

He said in his experience, a big tipping point for students is when they haul on armour, which can weigh 60-plus pounds and feel constrictive. Some go on, some do not.

Locally, he just wants to get a club going.

"If you even have any idea you want to come out and try it, come out and try it. I'm not expecting someone to dedicate their lives to this or be as passionate as I am."

Mills, another Forest employee, has been coming this summer.

"Sword fighting is cool," she says. "You watch a movie, you see sword fighting, and think 'I want to try that one day' but there is nary the opportunity to. It's a good activity. I just find it fun. I'm a very introverted person, so I'm stepping out of my comfort zone and trying new things. When I saw this, I thought that seems like a great idea. I was in need of a hobby."

Training starts about 6:30 p.m. at the seminar building at base camp. It is $25 per person for drop-in lessons, cash only.

Contact mwight@haliburtonforest.com

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What's on

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EVENTS

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Office open 9 a.m. to noon, clubroom closed.
Tuesdays: Games and cards night starting at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome. Fun darts at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid euchre 1 p.m. start, Remembrance Hall. Bingo, doors open at 5 p.m. with a 7 p.m. start time, Remembrance Hall. There will be a $1,000 jackpot Aug. 6, Sept. 3, and Oct. 1. Snack bar available from 5:30 p.m. – French fries and hot dogs available while supplies last.
Thursdays: General meeting third Thursday of the month.
Fridays: meat draw, five draws, five prizes each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m., tickets $2 per draw. Paul Sisson, MC. Friday fun darts 4:30 p.m. onwards. 50/50 draw at 5 p.m., tickets are $1 and available in the clubroom. Beginning July 4, board games for seniors from 10 a.m. to noon.
Saturdays: Open only for special events
Clubroom hours: Monday 3-9 p.m., Tues 5-9 p.m., Wed/Thurs 3-6 p.m., Fri 3-7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday closed.

Upcoming events: Drum circle Sept. 7, Oct. 5, Nov. 16, Dec. 7, Jan. 4, with a 1 p.m. start time.

Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, for rental information call Cheryl Waller at 905- 447-7741, email haliburtonlegionrentals@gmail.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com/facility-rentals Come on out and support Haliburton Legion Branch 129…everyone is welcome!

The Legion's mandate is to help veterans, assist with their mental and physical health and social wellbeing, provide a feeling of togetherness and combat isolation. All are welcome to attend our events.

Royal Canadian Legion - Mabel D. Brannigan Branch 636 Minden

Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Monday to Thursday** with regular menu and daily special including Liver Lovers' **Tuesday**.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and dinner 4-7 p.m.
Saturday all day breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541
Weekly activities:
Karaoke: call for dates
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week.
Monday: Euchre 1-3 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1-3 p.m., Darts 7-9 p.m. and euchre 7-9 p.m.

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 624 Wilberforce

Mondays: open 7 to 10 p.m.
Tuesdays: closed, special events only
Wednesdays: open 2 to 10 p.m.
Thursdays: open 2 to 10 p.m.
Fridays: open 2 to 11 p.m.
Saturdays: open 2 to 9 p.m.
Sundays: closed, special events only

Veteran's appreciation dinner Sept. 23. Tickets are $20 each. Veterans and their spouse are free. Cocktails start at 4:30 p.m. Dinner to follow.

Call the legion for more information at 705-448-2221.

EVENTS

Aug. 28, 8 p.m. Outdoor movie night at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre. Enjoy *The BFG*, an animated fantasy adventure based on the beloved book by Roald Dahl. Admission is by donation. Bring a lawn chair, blanket and favourite movie snacks. Light refreshments will be available.

Aug. 30, 3 to 7 p.m. Summer send off apres party at Sir Sam's Ski/Ride. Help one of Haliburton County's top tourist destinations celebrate its 60th anniversary over the Labour Day long weekend. This free event will feature live music by Carl Dixon, with drinks and BBQ available for purchase. Bring your own lawn chair.

Aug. 31, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Highland Grove Heritage Day at the Highland Grove Community Centre located at 5373 Loop Rd. There will be a BBQ, live music, crafts (demonstrations on book binding and needle felting), yard sale (rent a table for $5). The Kidd Schoolhouse Museum will be open. Contact Joanne at 705-448-2218.

Sept. 2, 10 a.m. to noon. The Bridge Youth Centre is partnering with Haliburton Home Hardware to provide new backpacks for youth who need back-to-school supplies. The backpacks come with notebooks, pencils, markers, rulers and erasers. Any student in need can stop by the centre at 2 Victoria St. to pick one out.

Sept. 2, 7 p.m. Unleash your gardening creativity. Join the Minden and District Horticultural Society at the Minden Community Centre. Guest speaker Vikki Whitney will talk about 'trend watch 2025 – creating a fall planter'. Monthly society meeting to follow. New members always welcome.

Sept. 6, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Reveal Part 2 live in-house painting event at Corney Gallery. Watch four of our artists go head-to-head as they each create their own unique interpretation of a surprise image. Snacks and coffee will be served.

Sept. 7, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. SIRCH Repair Café returns at a new location – the Minden Community Centre, located at 55 Parkside St. Visit our dedicated group of volunteers, who can fix everything from electronics and small appliances to textiles, ceramics, bikes, jewellery and more. For more information, call 705-457-1742 or email sirch.on.ca.

Sept. 10, 7 to 9 p.m. The Speaker Series welcomes David McPherson to the Haliburton Fish Hatchery, to share stories about the fascinating history of Toronto's iconic Massey Hall and The Legendary Horseshoe Tavern. Tickets are $15 per person.

Sept. 13, 10 a.m. Participate in a talk on 'the sustainable garden dilemma: are native plants the answer?' an n-person tour of Belinda Gallagher's garden near Tory Hill. Gallagher is the former head of horticulture at Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington/Hamilton. RSVP at environmenthaliburton705@gmail.com, or by calling 705-457-9239. Rain date is Sept. 14.

Sept. 15, 10 a.m. Haliburton veterans' annual Decoration Day at St. Anthony and Evergreen cemeteries on Pine Street in Haliburton. Pay respect to all of our military men and women – past and present. For more information, visit haliburtonlions.com or haliburtonlegion.com.

WHAT'S HAPPENING
AUG 28 - SEPT 3 this week

Thursday Aug 28

Boshkung Brewing Live Music, 6 p.m.to 9 p.m.

Friday Aug 29

Smoke on the Water, Kennisis Lake, Farewell Radio, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Haliburton Brewing, Melody Ryan, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Saturday Aug 30

Boshkung Brewing, Live Music 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Smoke on the Water, Kennisis Lake, Will Surphlis, 12 p.m.-3 p.m

Boshkung Smokehouse, Erin Blackstock, 6 p.m.-9 p.m.

Haliburton Brewing, Chris Smith, 2 p.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday Aug 31

Boshkung Brewing, Live Music 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Haliburton Brewing, Reg Corey, 2 p.m.-4 p.m.

The Dockside Bonnie View Inn, Ty Wilson, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Tuesday Sept 2

Haliburton Brewing Canoe FM Radio Bingo & dinner, 6 pm

Wednesday Sept 3

Boshkung Brewing, Open 11 a.m. – 9 p.m. Wing Wednesday!

DO YOU THROW EVENTS?

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Highlander classifieds

YARD SALE

GROUP YARD SALE – Stormy Lake Road, follow the signs. Saturday, Aug 30th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tools, log splitter, tractor c/w snowblower and trygg ice chains, canoe stained glass and many other items too numerous to list.

YARD SALE – 1244 Rice Rd, Minden Saturday, Aug 30th from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tires & Rims from Avalanche, 12" Craftsman Table Saw 220 amp, 12" Radio Arm Saw, 1-MSB Board 1/4:", 1-MSB Board 5/8" Various tools, household items & more!

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FOR SALE – 18 FT Cedar Strip Boat, restored last winter. Excellent condition. Comes with 3.3 HP Merc & Shorelander Trailer. Purchased in 2001, asking $6,500. Call 289-824-2780

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FOR SALE - 2TE Xplornet Hub 2.0 with 280 foot cable from dish to modem, ViaSat Xplornet RG1000 Wifi Gateway Router and power cord. Satelite dish and attachments. $40. Contact hstoveld@gmail.com

FOR SALE - Starlink Gen 2 dish, Wifi router with power cord, Ethernet Converter Adapter with 50 foot extension cable, standard pivot mount and shingle roof mounting plate. $200. Contact hstoveld@gmail.com

OBITUARY

John Fredrick Percival Payne

Passed away August 9, 2025 at Niagara On the Lake L.T.C.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Haliburton United Church at 10 George St, Haliburton, On, K0M1S0 at 2:00 pm on Saturday, September 6, 2025.

FOR SALE

FOR SALE – Lagostina 12 pc Cookware set $85. Gold Gym 410 Treadmill $100. All like new! Please call after 5 p.m. 705-286-2965

FOR SALE - 2004 Nissan Pathfinder for parts, Engine in Excellent condition with new alternator. Senior owned. Gas leak due to rust. $1,500. for engine or B/O Call 705-457-2808

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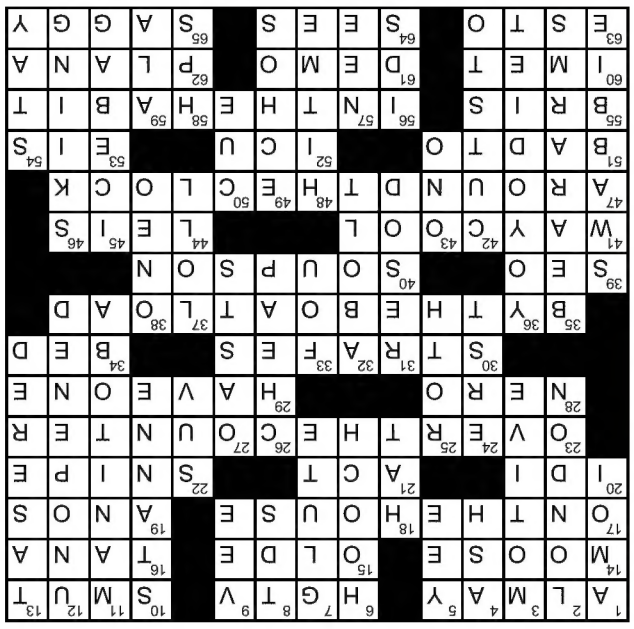

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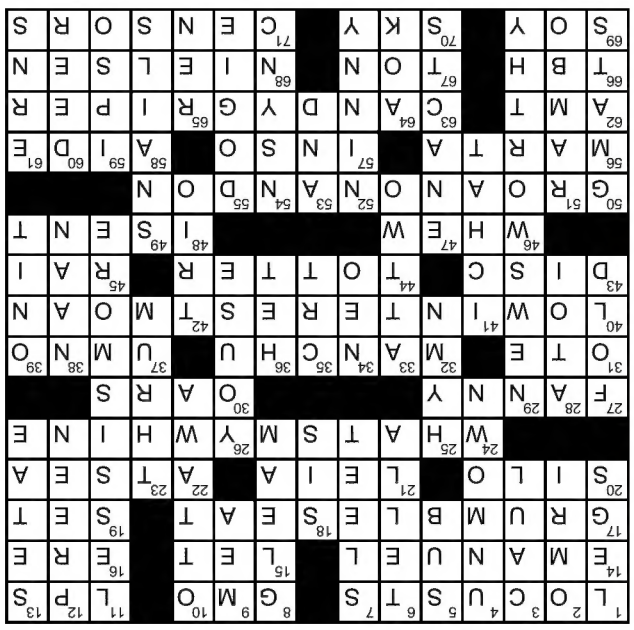

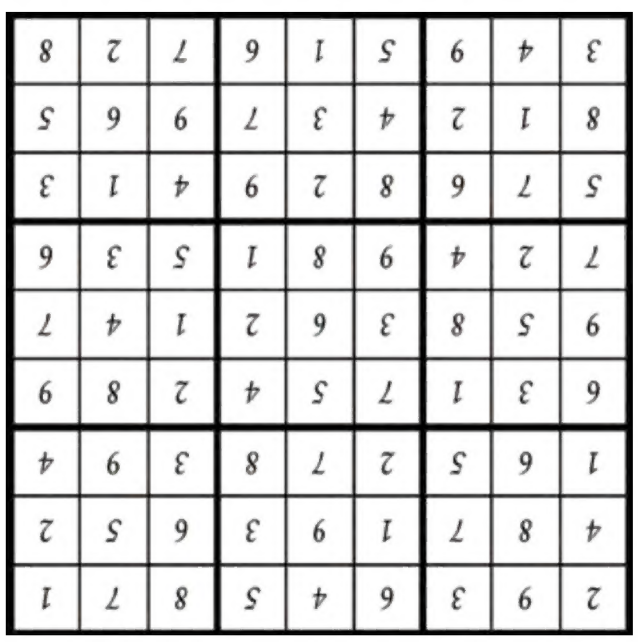

OBITUARY

In Loving Memory of

Donald "Don" Veno

Passed away peacefully at the Haliburton Hospital on Thursday, August 21, 2025 with his family at his side, in his 79th year.

Beloved husband of Margaret "Peggie" and dear father of Adele. Loving grandpa to Brendan and his wife Carrie and great grandfather (Papa) to Rayne. Predeceased by his brother Keith and his wife Laura and by his sister Diane. Dear uncle to Duane and Therrin. The family would like to thank the doctors and nurses in the palliative care unit at the Haliburton Hospital for providing excellent care and empathy.

Friends are invited to visit the family at the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., 127 Bobcaygeon Rd., P.O. Box 427, Minden KoM 2Ko for a Celebration of Don's Life on Saturday, September 27, 2025 from 12:00 o'clock noon until 2:00 pm.

Memorial Donations to the Minden Community Food Centre would be appreciated by the family.

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

In Loving Memory

Lloyd William Curry

Resident of Haliburton

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Lloyd William Curry, peacefully at the Haliburton Hospital in his 94th year. Predeceased by his beloved Wife, Louise Curry. Devoted Father of Tim (Bev), Tom (Kim), Dan (Coleen), and Dean (Terri). Fondly remembered by his grandchildren, Amanda, Jason, Shawna, Scot, Jodi, and Kelsey. Also remembered by his great-grandchildren, Riley, Wells, James, Ashtyn, and Lane.

Lloyd was a long-time employee of the Municipality of Dysart and a volunteer firefighter for over 30 years. Lloyd loved hockey, golfing, fishing, and most of all, spending time with his family. A special thank you to all the wonderful staff at the Extendicare and the Haliburton Hospital for their care and support for Lloyd.

Private Arrangements

As per the family's wishes, funeral arrangements are private. A private gathering for Lloyd's family will take place at a later date.
As an expression of sympathy, donations in Lloyd's memory can be made to the Extendicare Proud Pioneers. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME**, 13523 Hwy. #118 Haliburton, ON KoM 1So (705) 457-9209.

In Loving Memory of

Ronald "Ron" Stewart Murdoch

Passed away peacefully on Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at the age of 88.

Loving husband of Sally Brady. Dear father of Brent (Janice), Steven, Jennifer, Kevin (Kristy). Loving Grandpa of the late Donald (2019), Jessica (Ben), Cameron, Veronica, Daniel (Timber), Shelby (Quinton), Kinsley, Elsie and Great Grandpa of Bryce and Braxton. Fondly remembered by his family and friends.

Ron was an award-winning artist, owner of Spruce Bog Studio in Huntsville and the Horseshoe Valley Art Studio in Oro-Medonte. He will be remembered by his many artist friends from the East Central Ontario Art Association.

In keeping with Ron's wishes, cremation has taken place and a Celebration of his Life will take place at a later date.

Memorial Donations to the Heart and Stroke Foundation would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario KoM 2Ko.

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

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In Loving Memory of

Carol Moffat-Hill
(nee McDonald)

September 1, 1947 – August 21, 2025

With deep love and sadness, we announce the passing of Carol Moffat-Hill, who died peacefully at Haliburton Hospital on August 21, 2025, at the age of 77.

Carol was a devoted mother to Kim (Ken), Kelly (Mark), Sara (CJ), and Rachel (Jesse), and a proud and loving grandmother to Aly, Josh, Jess, Cam, and Tessa.

Carol's greatest joy came from spending time with her family at her cherished home on St. Nora Lake. Her home was always open, serving as a gathering place for family, friends, and anyone who needed comfort, company, or a cup of coffee. As a mother of four and grandmother of five, she was the heart of the family. She had an incredible knack for remembering every birthday, anniversary, and special occasion in the lives of her children and grandchildren, never failing to send a thoughtful card or make a call to let them know she cared.

For nearly 20 years, Carol worked as the friendly and familiar gatekeeper at the Dorset Lookout Tower, welcoming visitors from May through October.

Carol was predeceased by her husbands, Don (2017) and Dave (1991), and by her parents, Verna and Roy McDonald. She is survived by her siblings Brian (Sandy), Roger (Liz), and Marilyn (Howie), along with many nieces, nephews, extended family members, and dear friends. Her loyal dog, Nora, was always by her side and brought her comfort and companionship.

She will be remembered for her warmth, strength, and unwavering devotion to those she loved. Her presence was a gift, and her absence leaves a space that cannot be filled.

A private celebration of life will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Carol's memory may be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation or to the Kidney Foundation of Canada (by cheque only) and be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427 Minden, Ontario KoM 2Ko.

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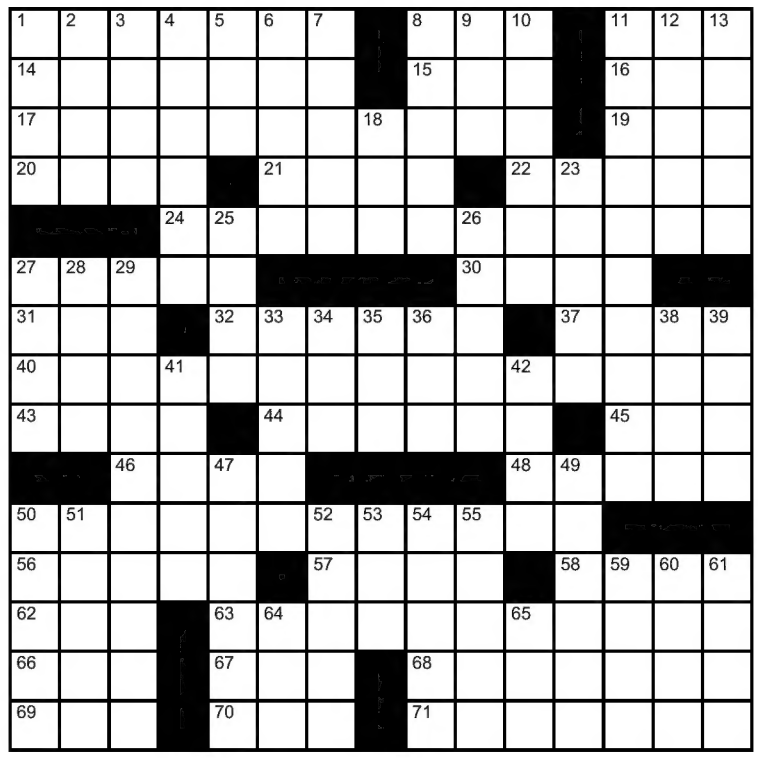
Highlander puzzles

Where's the Beef?

by Barbara Olson
© ClassiCanadian Crosswords



Across

1 Insects in a biblical plague
8 Plumcot or pineberry, for short
11 45s' bigger cousins
14 One-named R&B Juno nominee
15 Rent out
16 Bard's "before"
17 Where complainers ride in a car?
19 Ready-go link
20 Social media bubble
21 Sci-fi girl with cinnamon bun hair
22 Between coasts
24 Show in which panelist's guess a contestant's complaint?
27 ___ pack (waist pouch)
30 Aids for a conked out motor boat
31 Suffix meaning "native of," as Capri-
32 Fu ___ moustache
37 "Yeah, ... that ain't happenin'"
40 Complaint that few acknowledge?
43 Poker chip, e.g.
44 Walk with a wobble
45 Thor Heyerdahl craft
46 Brow-wiper's utterance
48 "___ a Letter to My Love" (1981 film)
50 Complain nonstop?
56 Ana's "Knives Out" role
57 Not ___ many words
58 Political adviser
62 Small quantity?
63 Complainer in a confectionery store?
66 "Frankly," in text shorthand
67 "This thing weighs a ___!"
68 "Dracula: Dead and Loving It" actor Leslie
69 Vegan milk source
70 Where to see the stars
71 Foes of free speech advocates

Down

1 Stands under a table?
2 Katz who played J.R.'s son on "Dallas"
3 Amniotic cap on some newborns
4 Unkempt, to lawn lovers
5 Hoagie
6 "I cannot ___ lie"
7 Snow/rain combo
8 Shine, as polished teeth
9 ___ culpa
10 Peace Tower city
11 "Brevity is the soul of wit," in other words
12 Fuss before the mirror
13 Botanical bristles
18 Bro's counterpart
23 Tap idly, as on a table
25 Many a funeral song
26 Yokel's plural pronoun
27 Origami instruction
28 "Bonne fête ___!"
29 Warranting publication
33 When some siestas start
34 Word form for "recent"
35 TV screen of old
36 In a flap, with "up"
38 Palindromic bread
39 "Already started!"
41 Former Apple messaging app
42 Rush or Triumph, e.g.
47 Passes into law
49 Escargots, pre-menu item
50 Future MBAs' exams
51 Tough role for Stallone?
52 Silly goose
53 "Your point being?"
54 Timberlake's boy band
55 Calf gone astray
59 Facto lead-in
60 Venison, pre-menu item
61 Sea eagles
64 Tickety-boo
65 ___ Faire (jousting event)

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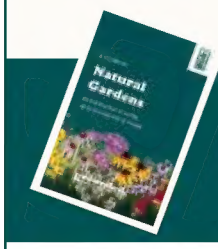

For a free guide to natural gardens in Haliburton County, visit groundedgardens.ca.

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MLS X12278143

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MLS X12146750

Long Lake — $899,990 — 2 | 6
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Kennisis River — $725,000 — 1 | 3
MLS X12137708

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MLS X12250094

Kushog Lake — $599,900 — 2 | 4
MLS X12227417

Glamor Lake — $525,000 — 1 | 3
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MLS X12348241

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